

4. (Twice amended) The acicular body according to claim 32 having a cross-sectional dimension less than about 10 μm .

B2
SUBC1
5. (Twice amended) An acicular body comprising at least one oxide of at least one metal selected from the group consisting of Groups IIA, IIIA, and IIIB of the Periodic Table, rare earth metals, and mixtures thereof; said acicular body having a polygonal cross section and a cross-sectional dimension greater than about 1 μm .

B3
SUBD1
B4
6. (Amended) An acicular body comprising at least one oxide of at least one metal selected from the group consisting of scandium, yttrium, lanthanum, aluminum, gallium, indium, thallium, cesium, praseodymium, neodymium, europium, gadolinium, terbium, dysprosium, holmium, erbium, thulium, ytterbium, lutetium, and mixtures thereof; said acicular body having a polygonal cross section and a cross-sectional dimension greater than about 1 μm .

30. (Amended) The acicular body according to claim 32 having a cross-sectional dimension less than about 5 μm .

B5
SUBC2
32. (Amended) An acicular body comprising at least one oxide of a metal selected from the group consisting of Groups IB, IIA, IIB, IIIA, IIIB, IVA, IVB, VA, VB, VIA, VIB, VIIA, VIIB, and VIIIA of the Periodic Table, rare earth metals, and mixtures thereof; said acicular body having a polygonal cross section and a cross-sectional dimension greater than about 1 μm .

REMARKS

The Office action dated October 31, 2002 and the cited references have been carefully considered.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-6 and 30-32 are pending. Claims 1, 2, and 31 are canceled. Therefore, claims 3-6, 30, and 32 are pending in the current prosecution.

Claims 31 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Claim 1-6 and 31-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claim 6 is rejected